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TITLE

ELECTRONIC BARTERING

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**PATENT APPLICATION
FOR:**

ELECTRONIC BARTERING

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PATENT APPLICATION
ELIAS ET AL.

ELECTRONIC BARTERING

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates, in general, to communication between devices connected to a wireless communication network. In particular, the present invention is a system and method for controlling access to an application program in a wireless device connected to a spontaneous and instant (ad-hoc) communications network.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Bartering is a trade between two parties that typically involves the exchange of one commodity for another commodity. For bartering to benefit both parties, the trade must be a "fair" exchange. Thus, the exchanged commodities must have an equal value.

[0003] Bartering is the basis for most systems of commerce. The American colonists relied primarily on a bartering system due to the scarcity of standardized coin or paper money to exchange beaver pelts, corn, musket balls, nails, tobacco, and deerskins. More recently, people rely upon a bartering system to trade baseball cards, football cards, postage stamps, audio and video recordings, video game cartridges, and books.

[0004] The commercial availability of the Internet and World Wide Web has spawned an electronic commerce revolution. Businesses throughout the world use electronic information technologies to conduct business with their trading partners. Some businesses use a standardized form of electronic data interchange (EDI) to communicate with their trading partners, negotiate

and complete trades, and manage inventories. Other businesses rely on electronic commerce technology to advertise their product, provide a forum for customers to shop, and take and fulfill orders from the customers.

[0005] There is a need for an electronic bartering system and method for facilitating a trade of an item owned by one person connected to a network for an item owned by another person connected to the network. The present invention addresses this need.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The system and method will rely upon the electronic commerce basis of the Internet to allow a user to publicize (1) a list of items that the user is requesting from other users, and (2) a list of items that the user has posted on the system for bartering. The other users can select from the list of items that the user has posted those items for which they want to trade. The system and method allow a user to peruse the aggregated collection of all users and only allows one user to view the collection of another user when a potential trade is in place. The system and method also allows either party to the trade to decline a trade based on a trading history of the other party to the trade.

[0007] A computer system, method and computer program product for facilitating a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user when the first user and the second user are connected to a network. The method comprises receiving a request from the first user, allowing the second user to access items owned by the first user, receiving a response from the second user, and receiving an acceptance from the first user. The request identifies the second item and is a potential trade request. The response identifies the first item

and is a trade offer. The trade comprises the potential trade request, the trade offer, and the acceptance. Completion of the trade further includes receiving a confirmation from both the first user and the second user.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

5 [0008] The accompanying figures best illustrate the details of the electronic bartering system and method for facilitating a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user, both as to its structure and operation. Like reference numbers and designations in these figures refer to like elements.

[0009] Figure 1 is a network diagram that illustrates the hardware components that form
10 the operating platform for one embodiment of an electronic bartering system for facilitating a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user.

[0010] Figure 2 is a block diagram that illustrates the hardware and software components comprising server computer 122 shown in Figure 1.

[0011] Figure 3 is a flow diagram of an embodiment of a process that facilitates a trade
15 of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user.

[0012] Figures 4A–4G are exemplary screen images from an implementation of bartering system 120 that demonstrates requesting an item from another user and accepting a trade offer in response.

[0013] Figures **5A–5H** are exemplary screen images from an implementation of bartering system **120** that demonstrates receiving a potential trade request from another user and issuing a trade offer in response.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

5 **[0014]** Figure **1** is a network diagram that illustrates the hardware components that form the operating platform for one embodiment of an electronic bartering system for facilitating a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user. As shown in Figure **1**, network **100** is a communication medium connecting client computer **A 115**, client computer **B 116**, bartering system **120**, and Muze database **130**. Bartering system **120** comprises
10 server computer **122**, barter database **124**, and local Muze database **126**. Client computer **A 115** is a general-purpose personal computer, workstation, or laptop configured to connect to network **100**. User **A 110** operates client computer **A 115** to communicate with server computer **122**. Client computer **B 116** is a general-purpose personal computer, workstation, or laptop configured to connect to network **100**. User **B 111** operates client computer **B 116** to communicate with
15 server computer **122**. Server computer **122** is a general-purpose network computer that manages network resources and accepts connections from devices such as client computer **A 115** and client computer **B 116** via network **100**. Server computer **122** connects to barter database **124** to store and retrieve data related to electronic bartering transactions. Server computer **122** also connects to local Muze database **126** to retrieve data that describes the items exchanged via the
20 electronic bartering system. Server computer **122** also connects to Muze database **130** to periodically retrieve data updates for local Muze database **126**. In one embodiment, the period of the updates is a configurable parameter. For example, the configuration may specify the

period of the updates to occur hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semiannually, or annually.

[0015] Network 100 shown in Figure 1 is a public communication network. However, bartering system 120 also contemplates the use of comparable network architectures.

5 Comparable network architectures include the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), a public packet-switched network carrying data and voice packets, a wireless network, and a private network. A wireless network includes a cellular network (e.g., a Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA) or Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) network), a satellite network, and a wireless Local Area Network (LAN) (e.g., a wireless fidelity (Wi-Fi) network). A private
10 network includes a LAN, a Personal Area Network (PAN) such as a Bluetooth network, a wireless LAN, a Virtual Private Network (VPN), an intranet, or an extranet. An intranet is a private communication network that provides an organization, such as a corporation, with a secure means for trusted members of the organization to access the resources on the organization's network. In contrast, an extranet is a private communication network that
15 provides an organization, such as a corporation, with a secure means for the organization to authorize non-members of the organization to access certain resources on the organization's network. The system also contemplates network architectures and protocols such as Ethernet, Token Ring, Systems Network Architecture, Internet Protocol, Transmission Control Protocol, User Datagram Protocol, Asynchronous Transfer Mode, and proprietary network protocols
20 comparable to the Internet Protocol.

[0016] Figure 1 shows one embodiment of bartering system 120 connecting to local Muze database 126 and Muze database 130. Muze is an organization that provides information solutions that supply the core data for all commercially available music, books, videos, and games. The Muze data provides value-added information such as reviews, biographies, notes, and annotations. The Muze data provides the necessary information that consumers need to make educated purchasing decisions and the crucial information that music service providers and retailers need to increase their sales and fulfill transactions. Muze database 130 is a commercial database that includes descriptions of the items that user A 110 and user B 111 may exchange via the electronic bartering system. For example, Muze database 130 includes a movie database, an audio database, a book database, and a video-game database. In another embodiment, Muze database 130 includes one or more commercial databases, where each commercial database includes data for a specific type of item. In yet another embodiment, Muze database 130 is a web portal that supplements a commercial database with customized data. In other embodiments, bartering system 120 may connect to any media database that will provide similar information to local Muze database 126 and Muze database 130. In yet other embodiments, bartering system 120 retrieves real-time data from Muze database 130 and does not require a connection to local Muze database 126.

[0017] Figure 2 is a block diagram that illustrates the hardware and software components comprising server computer 122 shown in Figure 1. Server computer 122 is a general-purpose network computer that manages network resources and accepts connections from devices such as client computer A 115 and client computer B 116 via network 100. Bus 200 is a communication medium that connects central processing unit (CPU) 201, data storage 202, and network adapter

203 to memory 210. Network adapter 203 also connects to barter database 124, local Muze database 126, and network 100 and is the mechanism that facilitates the passage of network traffic between bartering system 120 and barter database 124, local Muze database 126, and network 100. CPU 201 performs the disclosed methods by executing the sequences of operational instructions that comprise each computer program resident in, or operative on memory 210.

[0018] Figure 2 illustrates barter database 124, local Muze database 126, and data storage 202 as separate devices. In another embodiment, bartering system 120 stores the data in a single physical device that includes a separate logical partition for barter database 124, local Muze database 126, and data storage 202. Figure 2 also illustrates barter database 124 and local Muze database 126 as external devices, however it is to be understood that in another embodiment these devices may each be internal to bartering system 120. Figure 2 also illustrates data storage 202 as an internal device, however it is to be understood that in another embodiment this device may be external to bartering system 120 and accessible via a network connection. Bartering system 120 also contemplates distributing barter database 124, local Muze database 126, and data storage 202 over multiple storage devices to suit efficiency, performance, backup, and data warehousing requirements. In one embodiment, barter database 124 and local Muze database 126 utilize a relational database management system such as Oracle 9i (version 9.2) by Oracle™. Another embodiment of barter database 124 and local Muze database 126 may utilize a different database management tool that is either homegrown or publicly available and traded. Another embodiment of barter database 124 and local Muze database 126 may utilize an object-oriented

database management system such as FrameD, open source software provided by SourceForge.net.

[0019] In one embodiment, the configuration of memory 210 includes operating system software 211, application programs 212, Muze database interface program 213, and bartering
5 program 214. These computer programs store intermediate results in memory 210 and transmit final results via bus 200 for storage in and retrieval from barter database 124, local Muze database 126, or data storage 202. It is to be understood that in another embodiment the configuration of memory 210 may not simultaneously include these programs. CPU 201 coordinates loading a program when it is needed, storing intermediate results, transferring data
10 from one program to another, and unloading the program when it is no longer needed.

[0020] Operating system software 211 manages the basic operations of server computer 122. These basic operations include apportioning memory 210, prioritizing the execution of system tasks, and managing the communication with CPU 201 and other hardware components of server computer 122. The disclosed invention contemplates the use of the MS-DOS, Unix,
15 and Linux operating systems.

[0021] Application programs 212 control and supplement the interaction between a user and server computer 122. Application programs 122 include a web server, a mail server, and network communication protocol software. User A 110 operates a web browser (e.g., Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator) program resident on client computer A 115 to communicate
20 with a web server (e.g., Apache) resident on server computer 122. Similarly, user B 111 operates a web browser program resident on client computer B 116 to communicate with a web

server resident on server computer **122**. The web server program transmits and receives data via web pages and a protocol such as the hypertext transfer protocol. The mail server resident on server computer **122** communicates with a mail reader program resident on a client computer to transmit and receive electronic mail messages. Server computer **122** executes the network communication protocol software to transmit and receive network messages with a client computer.

[0022] Muze database interface program **213** controls the interaction between web server **122** and a commercial database, such as local Muze database **126** or Muze database **130**, that includes descriptions of the items that user A **110** and user B **111** may exchange via the electronic bartering system. In one embodiment, Muze database interface program **213** is an agent program that retrieves web pages from the commercial database, parses the retrieved web page to extract the data necessary for bartering system **120**, and serves the parsed data to the user. In another embodiment, Muze database interface program **213** sends a specific database query to the commercial database that returns a customized result set that is forwarded to bartering system **120**. Muze database interface program **213** also periodically connects to Muze database **130** to retrieve data updates for local Muze database **126**. In one embodiment, the period of the updates is a configurable parameter. For example, the configuration may specify the period of the updates to occur hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semiannually, or annually.

[0023] Bartering program **214** includes the program logic for controlling the negotiation of an electronic bartering transaction between two users. The electronic bartering transaction of

the disclosed invention contemplates the exchange of an item owned by one user for a similar item owned by another user. In another embodiment, the electronic bartering transaction involves the exchange of an item owned by one user for an item of equal value owned by another user. In one embodiment, the item of equal value is an item of the same type, but in a different condition (e.g., exchanging a digital videodisc (DVD) in excellent condition for a DVD in used condition). In another embodiment, the item of equal value may differ in type, as well as condition (e.g., exchanging a DVD in excellent condition for a video cassette recorder (VCR) tape in excellent condition).

[0024] Figure 3 is a flow diagram of an embodiment of a process that facilitates a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user. Specifically, Figure 3 illustrates bartering program 214 running on server computer 122 to negotiate an electronic bartering transaction between user A 110 operating client computer A 111 and user B 115 operating client computer B 116.

[0025] Figure 3 illustrates a process that begins with user A 110 adding an item (step 302) and user B 111 adding an item (step 304). Server computer 122 receives data communication messages from client computer A 111 and client computer B 116 that include a description of the item being added. Server computer 122 stores each new item in barter database 124 (step 306) and associates each item with the appropriate owner. Since each user may add as many items as necessary, it is to be understood that step 302 and step 304 may be performed as many times as necessary.

[0026] To begin the negotiation of an electronic bartering transaction, user A 110 sends a request to server computer 122 for an item owned by one or more users (step 308). Server computer 122 receives the request from user A 110 and stores the request in barter database 124 (step 310). Server computer 122 determines which users own the requested item and sends a notification to each owner of the requested item that a potential trade is in progress (step 312). User B 111 receives the notification and decides whether to accept the potential trade (step 314). If user B 111 decides not to accept the potential trade, the process exits. If user B 111 decides to accept the potential trade, server computer 122 permits user B to browse the list of items owned by user A 110 (step 316 and step 318). Prior to initiation of the trade, server computer 122 does not make accessible to user B 111 the list of items owned by user A 110 or any other user of bartering system 120. If user B 111 does not find any item that is of interest (step 320), the process exits. If user B 111 finds an item that is of interest (step 320), user B 111 sends a trade offer to server computer 122 (step 322). Server computer 122 stores the trade offer (step 324) and sends a notification to the owner of the item of interest that user B 111 is offering to trade for the item of interest owned by user A 110 (step 326). User A 110 considers and decides whether to accept the trade offer (step 328). If user A 110 decides not to accept the trade offer, the process exits. If user A 110 decides to accept the trade offer, user A 110 sends an acceptance to server computer 122 (step 330). Server computer 122 stores the acceptance (step 332) and sends a notification to user A 110 and user B 111 that user A 110 accepted the trade offer (step 334). Subsequently, user A 110 receives the notification and completes the trade (step 336) and user B 111 receives the notification and completes the trade (step 338).

[0027] Figures 4A–4G are exemplary screen images from an implementation of bartering system 120 that demonstrates requesting an item from another user and accepting a trade offer in response. Figure 4A illustrates the “My Stuff” web page that lists all of the items added by a user “kenw”. The list groups the items by type. As shown in Figure 4A, the listing includes
5 three items under the category CDs, “20 Golden Greats 1 disc Frank Sinatra”, A New Day Has Come 1 disc Celine Dion”, and “Duets 1 disc Elton John”. The types supported in the implementation shown in Figure 4A include DVDs, CDs, Books, Videogames, VHS, and Audiobooks. To add a new item, “kenw” clicks on either the blue “Add More Stuff” link or the “Add To My Stuff” button to navigate to an Add Stuff web page. For each item added, “kenw”
10 chooses a category from a pull-down menu and enters titles or keywords to retrieve a description of the desired item from local Muze database 126. If the description fits the new item, “kenw” selects the item, chooses a condition of the item from a pull-down menu, and clicks on the “List Item” button to add the new item to the “My Stuff” listing. To request an item from another user, “kenw” clicks on the icon that represents the type of the new item (e.g., Books) to navigate
15 to a web page for adding Books. On the Books web page, “kenw” enters search terms to retrieve a description of the new item from local Muze database 126. If the description fits the new item, “kenw” selects the item and it will display in the “My Stuff” listing.

[0028] Figure 4B illustrates the Home Page for bartering system 120. Below the icons that represent the item types (e.g., DVDs, CDs, Books, Videogames, NHS, and Audiobooks), the
20 Home Page includes a status display for the electronic bartering trades associated with a user such as “kenw”. The status display has a left and a right portion. The left portion of the status display includes a list of the items that “kenw” has requested from other users. The right portion

of the status display includes a list of the items that other users have requested from “kenw”. Each item displayed in the left portion and the right portion has a status and is associated with a status symbol that displays next to the listed item. As shown in Figure 4B, the left portion of the status display indicates that “kenw” has requested the item “Medusa” from other members. The status symbol to the right of the items is an empty box indicating that, as yet, none of the users who have “Medusa” listed in their “My Stuff” list have responded to “kenw” with a trade offer.

[0029] Figure 4C illustrates the Home Page for bartering system 120 after receiving a trade offer from another user. The left portion of the status display shown in Figure 4C indicates that one of the users who own “Medusa” have responded to “kenw” with a trade offer. This indication is shown by the status symbol changing to a Zunalert (i.e., an arrow pointing to the left). The Zunalert indicates that another user has responded to the item request from “kenw” by finding an item of interest in the collection owned by “kenw” and sending to “kenw” a trade offer. The Zunalert also indicates that “kenw” has 24 hours to respond to the trade offer by the other user. Figure 4C-2 illustrates the Home Page after “kenw” clicks on “Medusa” to examine the trade offer and returns to the Home Page without responding to the trade offer. The status symbol in Figure 4C-2 has changed from a Zunalert to a clock symbol to indicate that a trade is in progress and that “kenw” has less than 24 hours to accept the trade offer from the other user. Figure 4D illustrates the web page displayed as a result of “kenw” clicking on the item “Medusa” on the Home Page. As shown in Figure 4D, “bbloom” has the CD “Medusa” in “Very good” condition and will trade it for the CD “A New Day Has Come”. To the right of the description of the trade offer are trading statistics for “bbloom” to describe a history of the accuracy of the item condition and delivery time for previous trades that he has completed. Further to the right

of the description of the trade offer is a countdown expiration timer for the trade offer. If “kenw” decides to make this trade with “bbloom” by clicking the “Make This Trade” button, bartering system 120 will describe, as shown in Figure 4E, how to complete the trade.

[0030] Figure 4F illustrates the feedback mechanism for updating the trading statistics
5 for a user. After receiving the item in the mail, “kenw” enters an evaluation of the CD “Medusa” sent by “bbloom”. The evaluation may include as shown in Figure 4F selecting an item condition from a pull-down menu, selecting a delivery time from a pull-down menu, and entering text comments. Figure 4G shows that “kenw” evaluated the item condition proffered by “bbloom” as being accurate (i.e., positive), the delivery time as timely (i.e., positive), and
10 provided the comment “Great!”

[0031] Figures 5A–5H are exemplary screen images from an implementation of bartering system 120 that demonstrates receiving a potential trade request from another user and issuing a trade offer in response. Figure 5A illustrates the “My Stuff” page that lists all of the items added by user “kenw”. The list is similar to the list shown in Figure 4A, but reflects the trade of the
15 item under the category CDs described as and “A New Day Has Come”. Thus, the only items in the list are under the category CDs described as “20 Golden Greats 1 disc Frank Sinatra” and “Duets 1 disc Elton John”.

[0032] Figure 5B illustrates the Home Page for bartering system 120. Below the icons that represent the item types, the Home Page includes a status display similar to that shown in
20 Figure 4B. As shown in Figure 5B, the left portion of the status display indicates that user “kenw” has requested “Running Man” from other users and the status symbol to the right of

“Running Man” is a check mark to indicate that the trade is complete and awaiting delivery. The right portion of the status display indicates that another user has requested the item described as “Paris My Love” from user “kenw”. The status symbol to the right of “Paris My Love” is a star to indicate that a potential trade is in progress. As shown in Figure 5C, by clicking on the CD titled “Paris My Love” in the right portion of the status display, bartering system 120 will display a web page to user “kenw” that lists the CDs that user “bbloom” has available for trading. User “kenw” browses the list and decides that the CD described as “Best Of Reba McEntire 1 disc Reba McEntire” in like new condition is interesting. Since the trading statistics associated with user “bbloom” are positive, user “kenw” decides to click on the item to send a trade offer to user “bbloom”. If the trading statistics associated with user “bbloom” were not positive, user “kenw” may click on the “Dismiss this offer” button to decline the trade offer from user “bbloom”. Figure 5D illustrates a warning confirmation message that bartering system 120 will display to user “kenw” to confirm that the trade offer should be placed.

[0033] Figure 5E illustrates a web page that bartering system 120 will display to user “kenw” if he clicks on the item “Paris My Love” on the Home Page after receiving the warning confirmation message shown in Figure 5D. Figure 5E informs user “kenw” that he has agreed to trade his “Paris My Love” CD for the “Born In The U.S.A.” CD owned by user “bbloom” and also shows the time remaining for “bbloom” to accept the trade offer.

[0034] Figure 5F illustrates the Home Page for bartering system 120 after user “bbloom” accepts the trade offer. In the right portion of the status display, the status symbol to the right of the item that user “bbloom” requested, “Paris My Love” has changed to a “click to finish”

symbol. The “click to finish” symbol indicates that user “bbloom” has accepted the trade offer shown in Figure 5E. By clicking on the item, bartering system 120 will describe, as shown in Figure 5G, how to complete the trade. Figure 5H illustrates an electronic mail message that user “kenw” will receive as notification that user “bbloom” has accepted the trade offer.

5 [0035] Although the disclosed embodiments describe a fully functioning electronic bartering system and method for facilitating a trade of an item owned by one person connected to a network for an item owned by another person connected to the network, the reader should understand that other equivalent embodiments exist. Since numerous modifications and variations will occur to those who review this disclosure, the electronic bartering system and
10 method is not limited to the exact construction and operation illustrated and disclosed. Accordingly, this disclosure intends all suitable modifications and equivalents to fall within the scope of the claims.

We claim:

1. A system for facilitating a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user, the first user and the second user connected to a network, comprising:

a memory device; and

5 a processor disposed in communication with the memory device, the processor configured to:

receive a request from the first user, the request including an identification of the second item;

allow the second user to access at least one item owned by the first user, said at least one item including the first item;

10 receive a response from the second user, the response including an identification of the first item; and

receive an acceptance from the first user.

15 2. The system of claim 1, wherein to receive the request, the processor is further configured to: store the request; and send a notification of the request to the second user.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein the storing of the request is to a database.

20 4. The system of claim 1, wherein the allowing of the second user to access said at least one item owned by the first user succeeds the receiving of the request from the first user.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein to allow the second user to access said at least one item owned by the first user, the processor is further configured to:

display a trading history for the first user; and

5 display said at least one item owned by the first user

6. The system of claim 5, wherein the trading history is a summary of evaluations by traders who were opposite the first user in previous trades.

10 7. The system of claim 6, wherein the summary includes an evaluation of proffered conditions, and an evaluation of delivery times.

8. The system of claim 5, wherein the display of said at least one item owned by the first user includes a proffered condition of said at least one item.

15

9. The system of claim 1, wherein to receive the response from the second user, the processor is further configured to:

store the response; and

send a notification of the response to the first user.

20

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the storing of the response is to a database.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein to receive the acceptance, the processor is further configured to:

store the acceptance; and

send a notification of the acceptance to the second user.

5

12. The system of claim 1, wherein after the receiving of the acceptance, the processor is further configured to:

associate a time period with the trade,

whereby the first user and the second user confirm the trade during the time period.

10

13. The system of claim 12, wherein a countdown timer measures the time period.

14. The system of claim 11, wherein the storing of the acceptance is to a database.

15 15. The system of claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to:

store said at least one item owned by the first user; and

store at least one item owned by the second user, said at least one item owned by the second user including the second item.

20 16. The system of claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to:

receive a first confirmation from the first user; and

receive a second confirmation from the second user,

whereby the first confirmation and the second confirmation indicate completion of the trade.

17. The system of claim 1, wherein each item includes a type and a proffered condition.

5 18. The system of claim 1, wherein the type includes a video media format, an audio media format, a printed media format, or a video game format.

19. A method for facilitating a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user, the first user and the second user connected to a network, comprising:
10 receiving a request from the first user, the request including an identification of the second item;
allowing the second user to access at least one item owned by the first user, said at least one item including the first item;
receiving a response from the second user, the response including an identification of the
15 first item; and
receiving an acceptance from the first user.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein the receiving of the request further comprises:
storing the request; and
20 sending a notification of the request to the second user.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing of the request is to a database.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein the allowing of the second user to access said at least one item owned by the first user succeeds the receiving of the request from the first user.

5 23. The method of claim 19, wherein the allowing of the second user to access said at least one item owned by the first user further comprises:

displaying a trading history for the first user; and

displaying said at least one item owned by the first user

10 24. The method of claim 23, wherein the trading history is a summary of evaluations by traders who were opposite the first user in previous trades.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the summary includes an evaluation of proffered conditions, and an evaluation of delivery times.

15 26. The method of claim 23, wherein the display of said at least one item owned by the first user includes a proffered condition of said at least one item.

27. The method of claim 19, wherein the receiving of the response from the second user further
20 comprises:

storing the response; and

sending a notification of the response to the first user.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein the storing of the response is to a database.

29. The method of claim 19, wherein the receiving of the acceptance further comprises:

5 storing the acceptance; and

sending a notification of the acceptance to the second user.

30. The method of claim 19, wherein after the receiving of the acceptance, further comprising:

associating a time period with the trade,

10 whereby the first user and the second user confirm the trade during the time period.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein a countdown timer measures the time period.

32. The method of claim 29, wherein the storing of the acceptance is to a database.

15 33. The method of claim 19, further comprising:

storing said at least one item owned by the first user; and

storing at least one item owned by the second user, said at least one item owned by the
second user including the second item.

20 34. The method of claim 19, further comprising:

receiving a first confirmation from the first user; and

receiving a second confirmation from the second user,
whereby the first confirmation and the second confirmation indicate completion of the trade.

35. The method of claim 19, wherein each item includes a type and a proffered condition.

5

36. The method of claim 19, wherein the type includes a video media format, an audio media
format, a printed media format, or a video game format.

37. A computer program product for facilitating a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a
10 second item owned by a second user, the first user and the second user connected to a network,
comprising:

a computer readable medium storing:

program code for receiving a request from the first user, the request including an
identification of the second item;

15 program code for allowing the second user to access at least one item owned by the
first user, said at least one item including the first item;

program code for receiving a response from the second user, the response including
an identification of the first item; and

program code for receiving an acceptance from the first user.

20

38. The computer program product of claim 37, wherein the program code for receiving the
request further comprises:

program code for storing the request; and

program code for sending a notification of the request to the second user.

39. The computer program product of claim 37, wherein the program code for allowing the

5 second user to access said at least one item owned by the first user further comprises:

program code for displaying a trading history for the first user; and

program code for displaying said at least one item owned by the first user

40. The computer program product of claim 37, wherein the program code for receiving the

10 response from the second user further comprises:

program code for storing the response; and

program code for sending a notification of the response to the first user.

41. The computer program product of claim 37, wherein the program code for receiving the

15 acceptance further comprises:

program code for storing the acceptance; and

program code for sending a notification of the acceptance to the second user.

42. The computer program product of claim 37, wherein after the receiving of the acceptance,

20 further comprising:

program code for associating a time period with the trade,

whereby the first user and the second user confirm the trade during the time period.

43. The computer program product of claim 37, further comprising:
program code for storing said at least one item owned by the first user; and
program code for storing at least one item owned by the second user, said at least one item
5 owned by the second user including the second item.

44. The computer program product of claim 37, further comprising:
program code for receiving a first confirmation from the first user; and
program code for receiving a second confirmation from the second user,
10 whereby the first confirmation and the second confirmation indicate completion of the trade.

45. A graphical user interface, comprising:
a first region to display items that a user is requesting from other users; and
a second region to display items that the other users are requesting from the user,
15 wherein the items displayed in the first region and the second region include an indicator to
communicate to the user a status of the trade.

46. The graphical user interface of claim 45, wherein for items in the first region the status
includes no response, awaiting confirmation, and trade complete.

47. The graphical user interface of claim 45, wherein for items in the second region the status
includes potential trade, awaiting confirmation, and trade complete.

ELECTRONIC BARTERING

ABSTRACT

An electronic bartering system and method for facilitating a trade of a first item owned by a first user for a second item owned by a second user when the first user and the second user are connected to a network. The electronic bartering system and method receives a request from the first user, allows the second user to access items owned by the first user, receives a response from the second user, and receives an acceptance from the first user. The request identifies the second item and is a potential trade request. The response identifies the first item and is a trade offer. The trade comprises the potential trade request, the trade offer, and the acceptance. Completion of the trade further includes receiving a confirmation from both the first user and the second user.

Figure 1

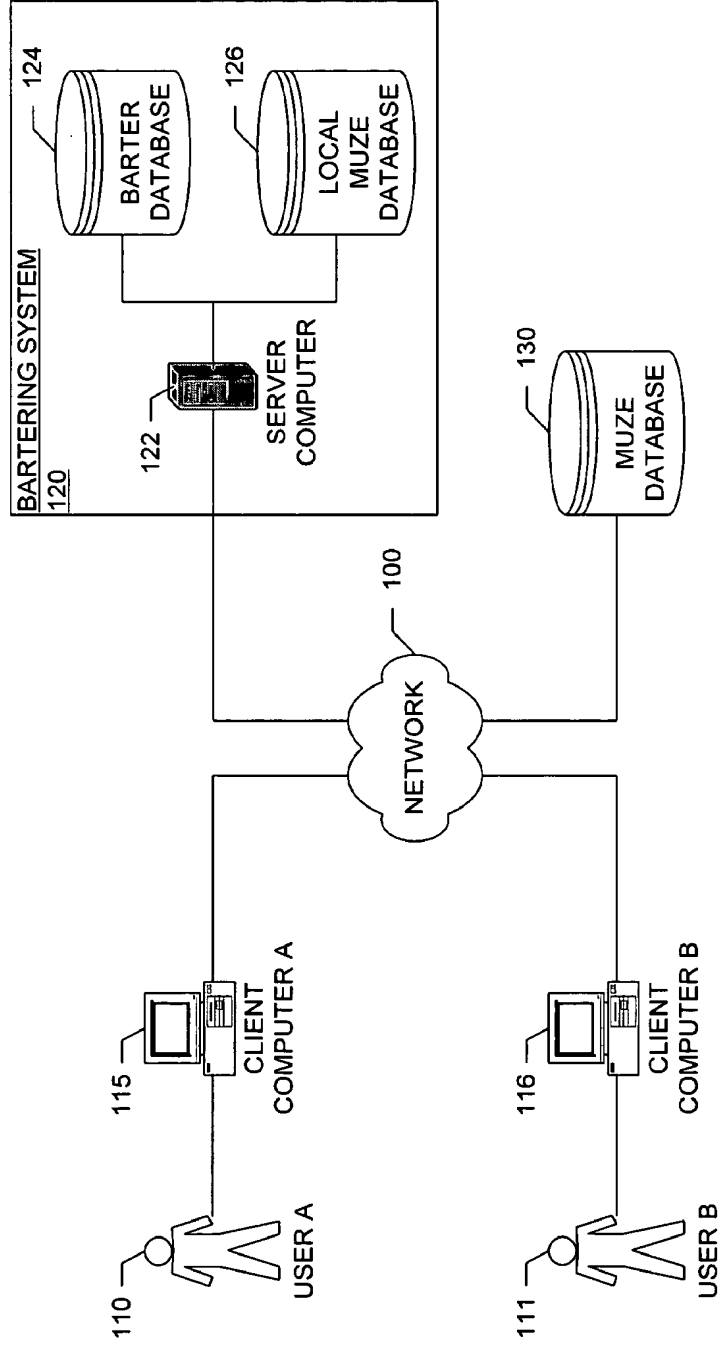


Figure 2

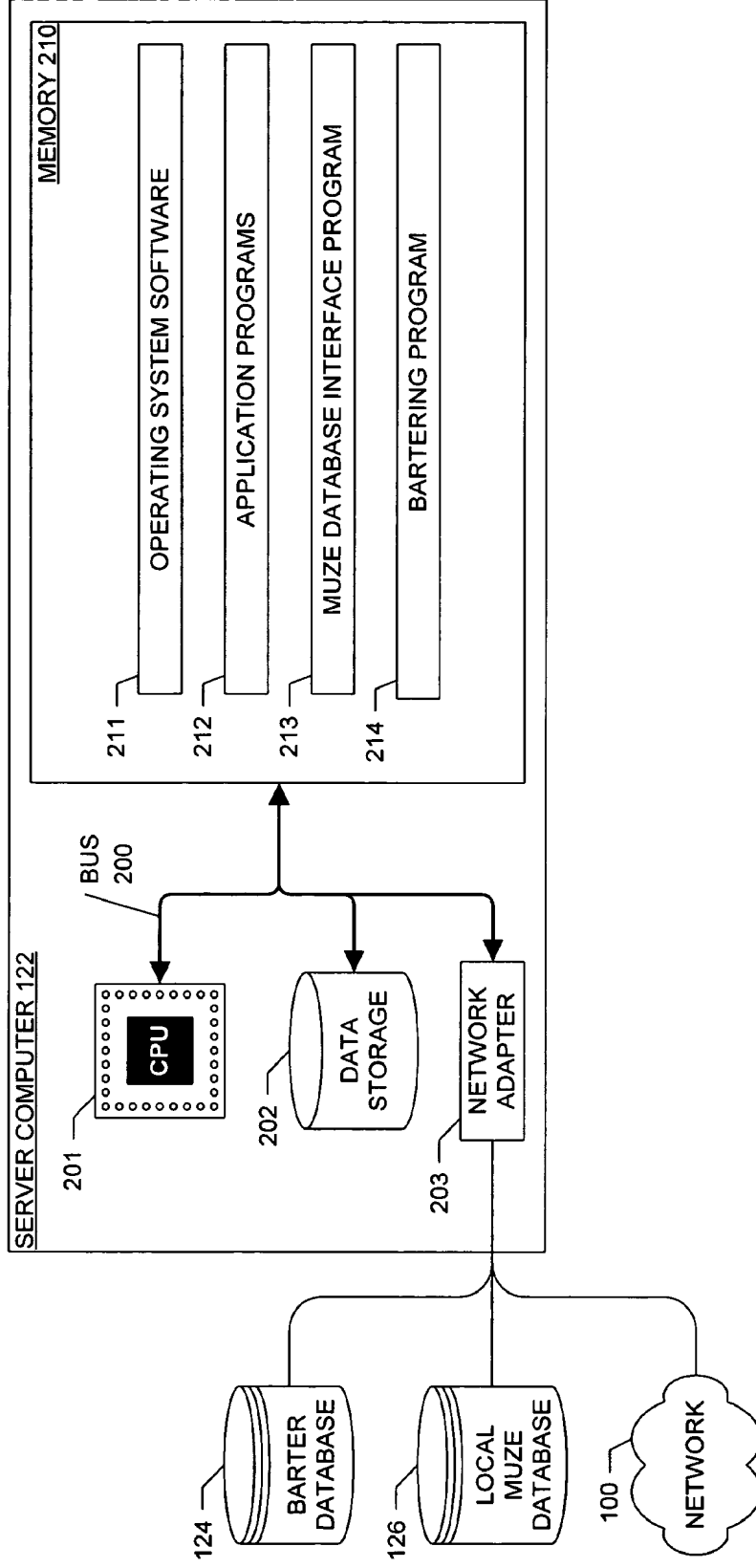


Figure 3

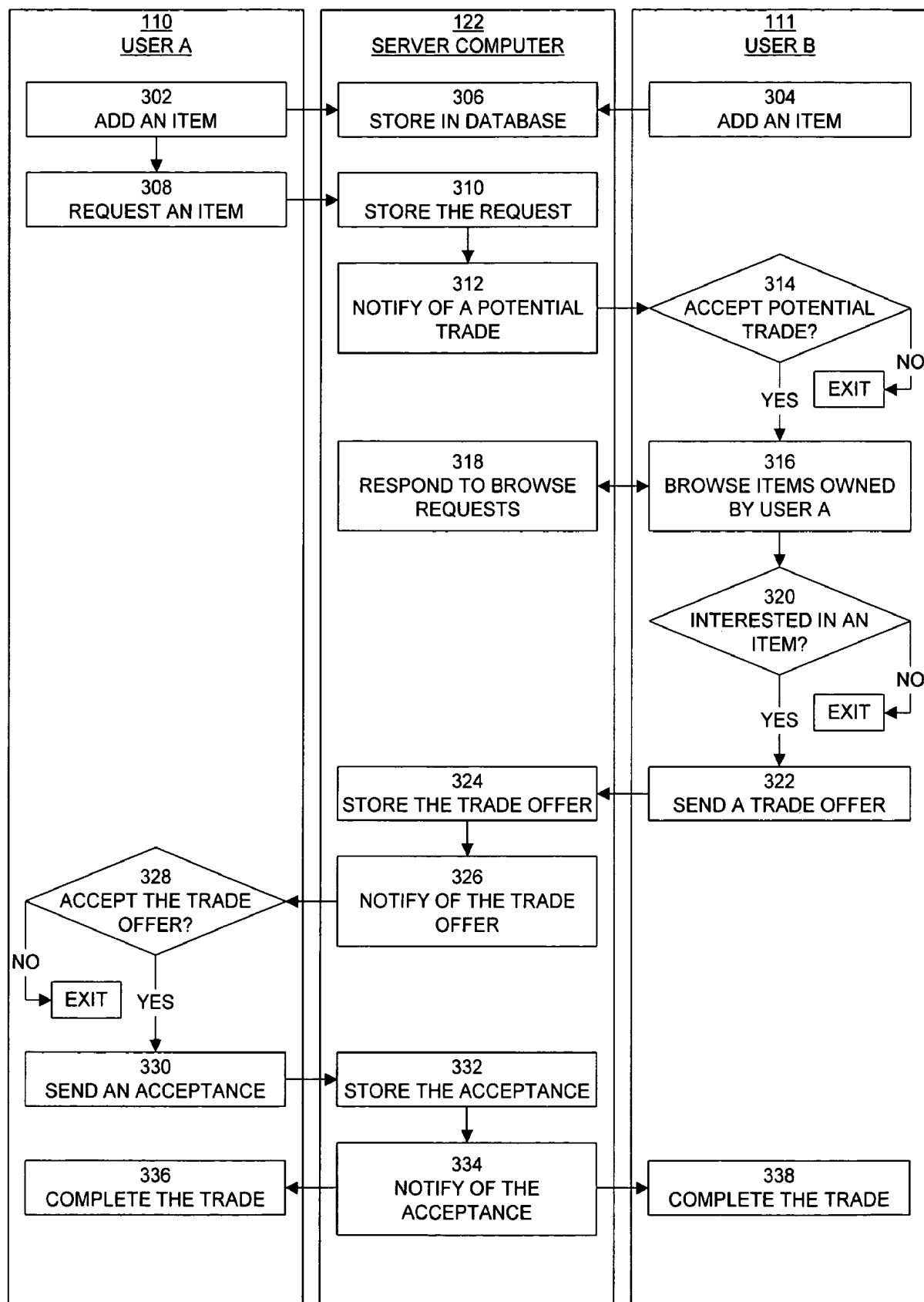
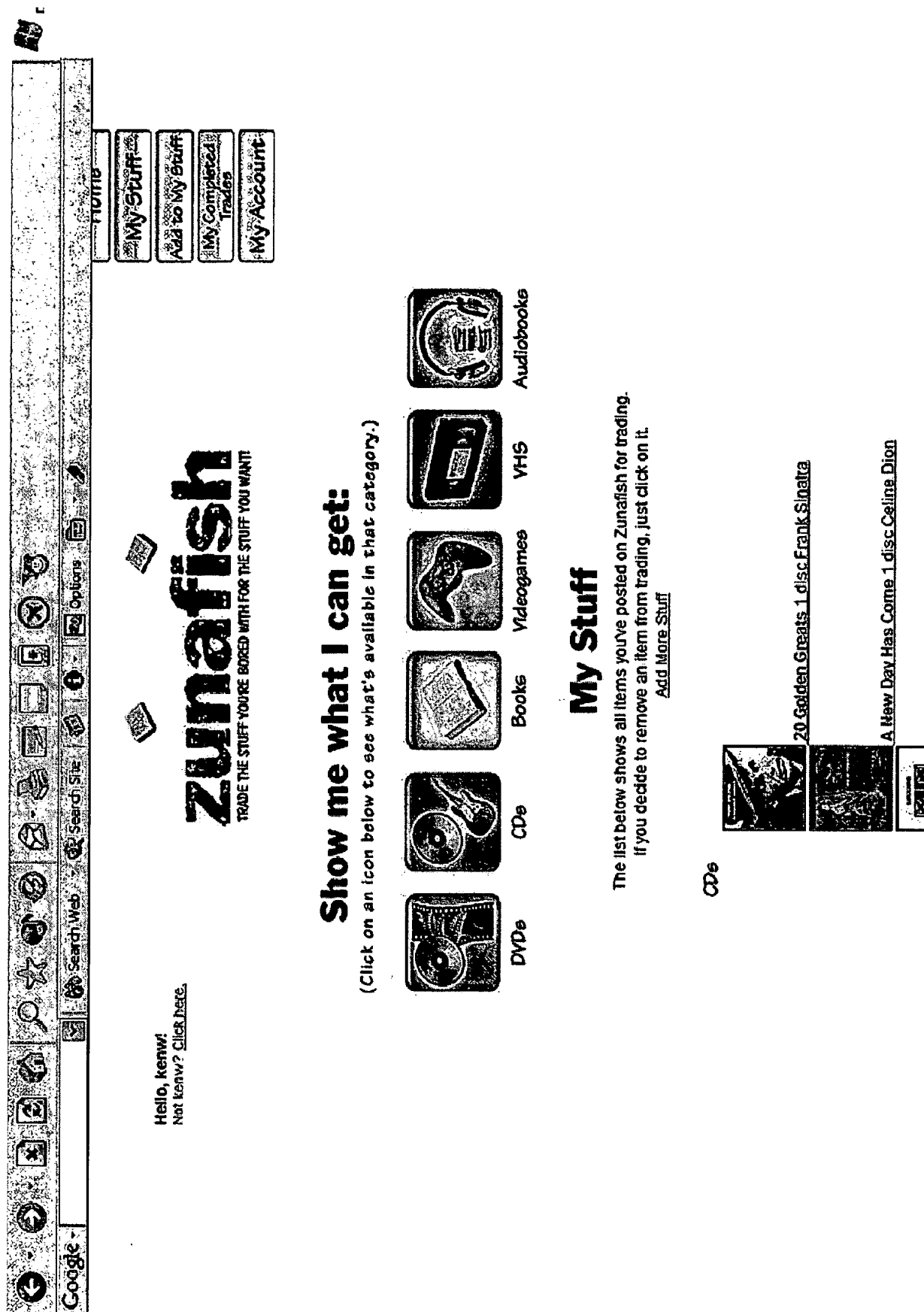
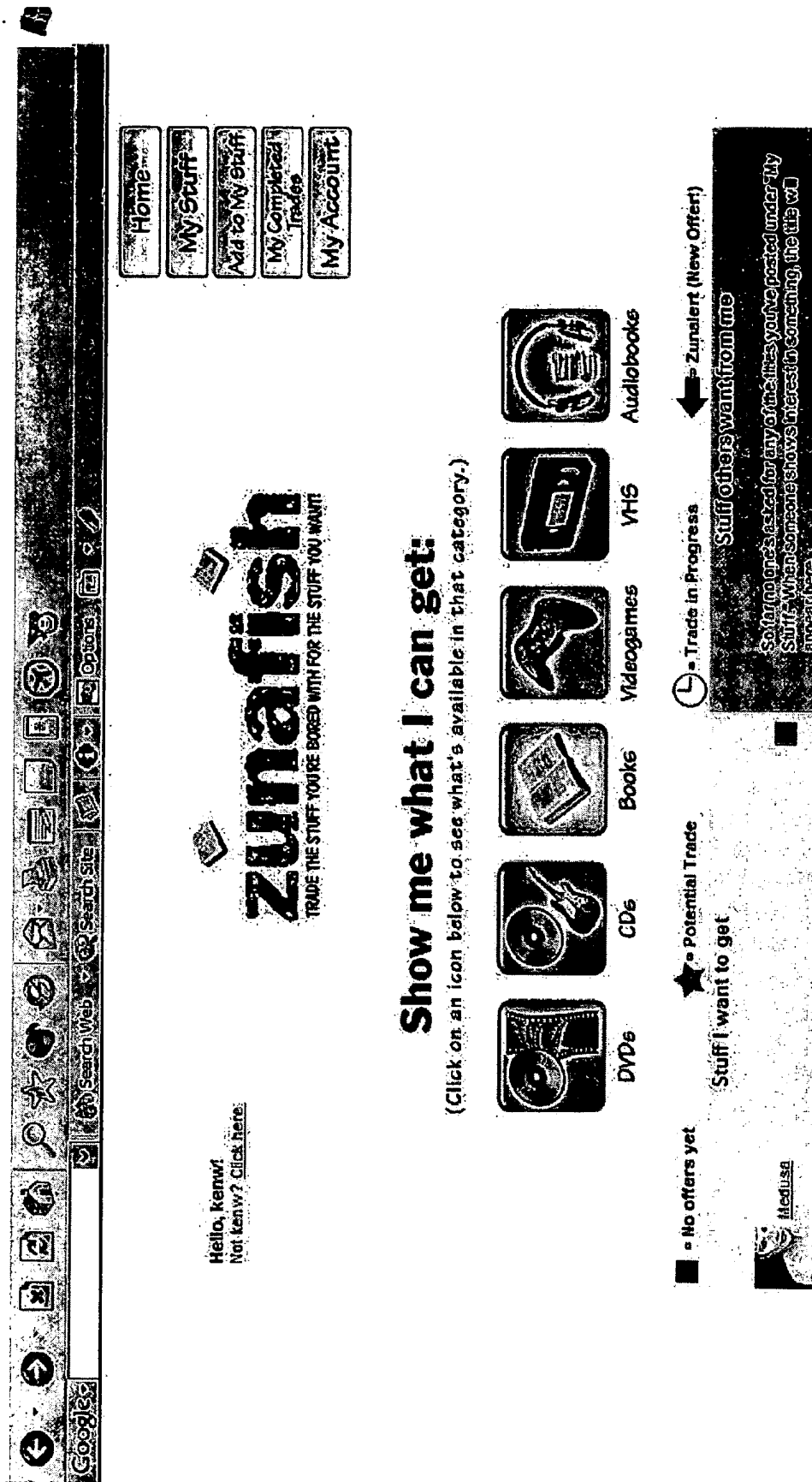


Figure 4A



BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Figure 4B



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Figure 4C

Google

Search Web

Search Site

Options

Home

My Stuff

Add to My Stuff

My Completed Trades

My Account

TRADE THE STUFF YOU'RE BORED WITH FOR THE STUFF YOU WANT!

Hello, kenw!

Not kenw? [Click here](#)

Show me what I can get:

(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)

DVDs
 CDs
 Books
 Videogames
 VHS
 Audiobooks

No offers yet
 Potential Trade
 Trade in Progress
 Zunalert (New Offer!)

Medusa
 Earn three free trades!

Hassle-free mailing info

Potential Trade
 Trade in Progress
 Zunalert (New Offer!)

Medusa
 Earn three free trades!

Hassle-free mailing info

Potential Trade
 Trade in Progress
 Zunalert (New Offer!)

Medusa
 Earn three free trades!

Hassle-free mailing info

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Figure 4C-2

The screenshot displays the Zanafish website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Home, My Stuff, Add to My Stuff, My Completed Trades, and My Account. Below this is a large banner for 'Zanafish' with the tagline 'TRADE THE STUFF YOU'RE BORED WITH FOR THE STUFF YOU WANT'. A search bar is located on the left side of the banner. To the right of the banner, there is a section titled 'Show me what I can get:' with a subtext '(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)'. This section contains icons for DVDs, CDs, Books, Videogames, VHS, and Audiobooks. Below the icons, there is a section titled 'Stuff I want to get' with a subtext 'No offers yet'. To the right of this section, there is a banner for 'Zunalert (New Offer!)' with the text 'Stuff others want from me'. Below the banner, there is a section titled 'Earn three free trades!' with a subtext 'Hassle-free mailing info'. At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the text 'BEST AVAILABLE COPY'.

Google

Search Web

Search Site

Options

Home

My Stuff

Add to My Stuff

My Completed Trades

My Account

Zanafish

TRADE THE STUFF YOU'RE BORED WITH FOR THE STUFF YOU WANT

Hello, kenw!
Not kenw? Click here

Show me what I can get:
(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)

DVDs

CDs

Books

Videogames

VHS

Audiobooks

⌚ = Trade in Progress

★ = Potential Trade

■ = No offers yet

Stuff I want to get

⌚ = Zunalert (New Offer!)

Stuff others want from me

So turn on's asked for any of the items you've posted under "My Stuff". When someone shows interest in something, the items will appear here.

Earn three free trades!

Hassle-free mailing info

Medusa

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Figure 4D

Google

Search Web

Search Site

Options


Home

My Stuff

Add to My Stuff

My Completed Trades

My Account



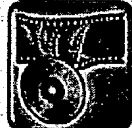
TRADE THE STUFF YOU'RE BORED WITH FOR THE STUFF YOU WANT!

Hi! I'm Kenwi!


Not Kenwi? [Click here.](#)

Show me what I can get:


(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)




DVDs




CDs




Books



Videogames



VHS



Audiobooks

You requested the CD Medusa

bblloom has the CD Medusa in "Very good" condition and will trade it for your CD A New Day Has Come.

Trading History Last 20 Trades

Items arrived in stated condition? ☒

Items arrived on time? ☒

Time remaining until offer expires:

23h45m

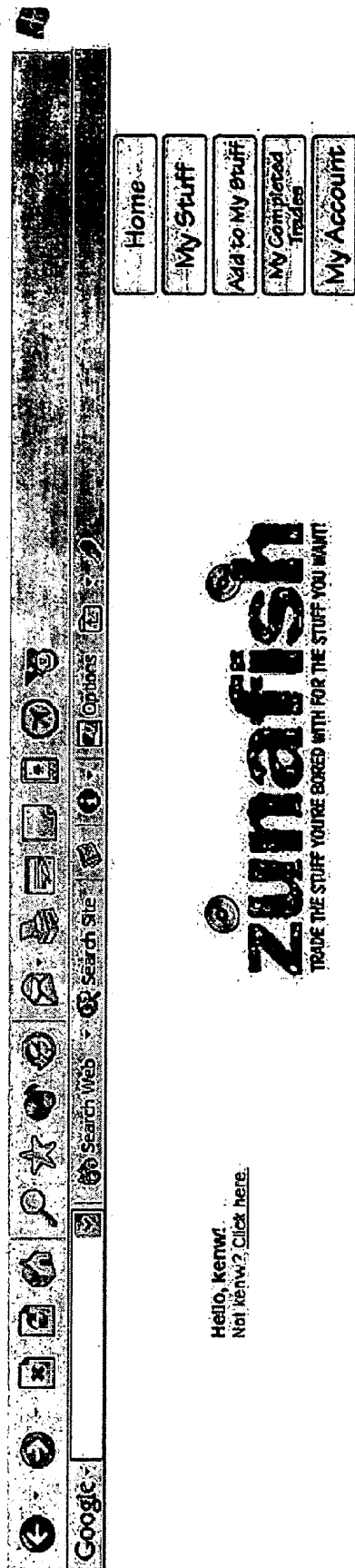
Make This Trade

No Thanks

Homepage | My Stuff | Feedback About Me | My Account
Rules & Regulations | Privacy Policy | FAQs
© 2003 Zunafish. Powered by Net Theory.
Powered by **muzz**

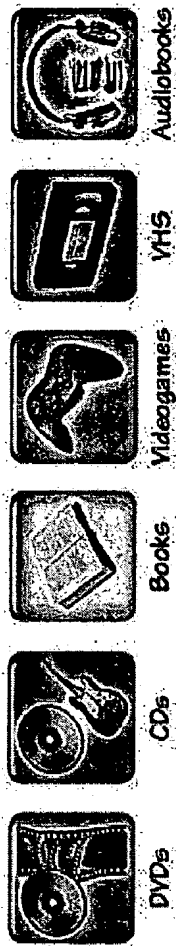
BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Figure 4E



Show me what I can get:

(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)



How to Complete Your Trade

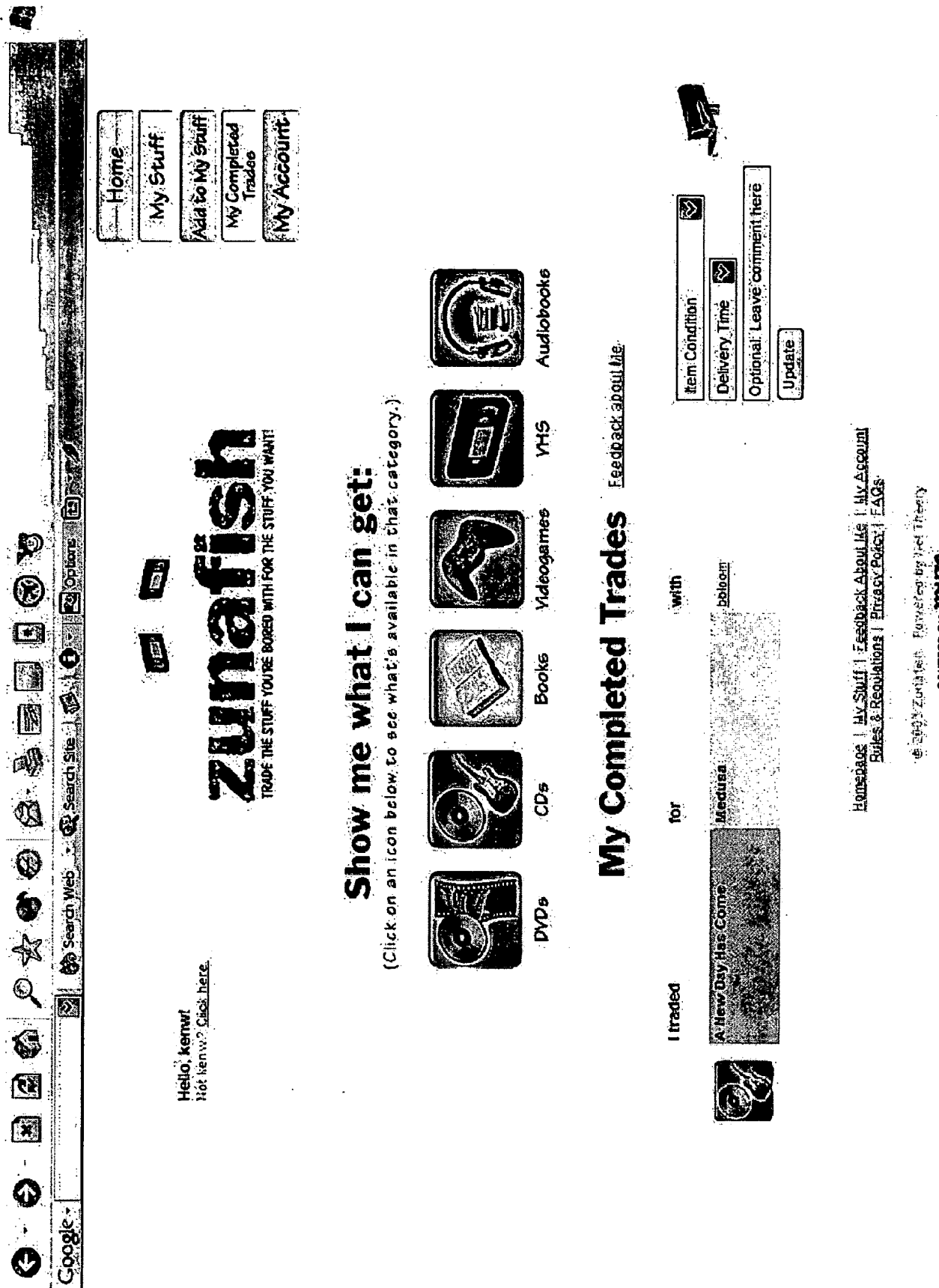
Congratulations ken — your trade is almost complete! You have agreed to swap your A New Day Has Come CD for bbloom's Medusa CD. A New Day Has Come has been removed from your collection and \$1 has been charged to your account; now here's what you have to do:

Within the next 3 days, please mail your A New Day Has Come CD to:

Cut this out & use it as a mailing label!

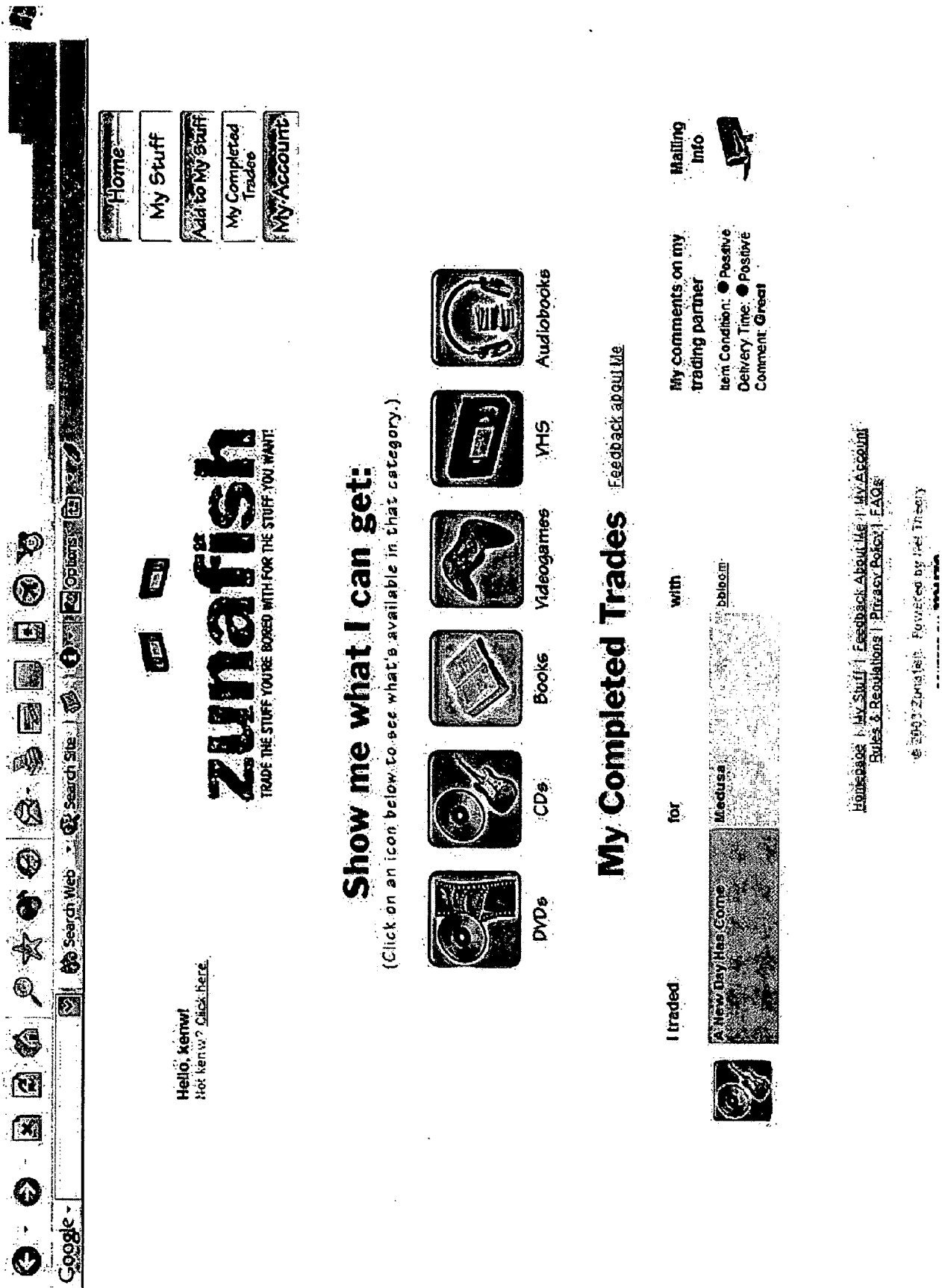
WILLIAM BLOOM
55 WEST END AVE., #11E
NEW YORK NY 10023

Figure 4F



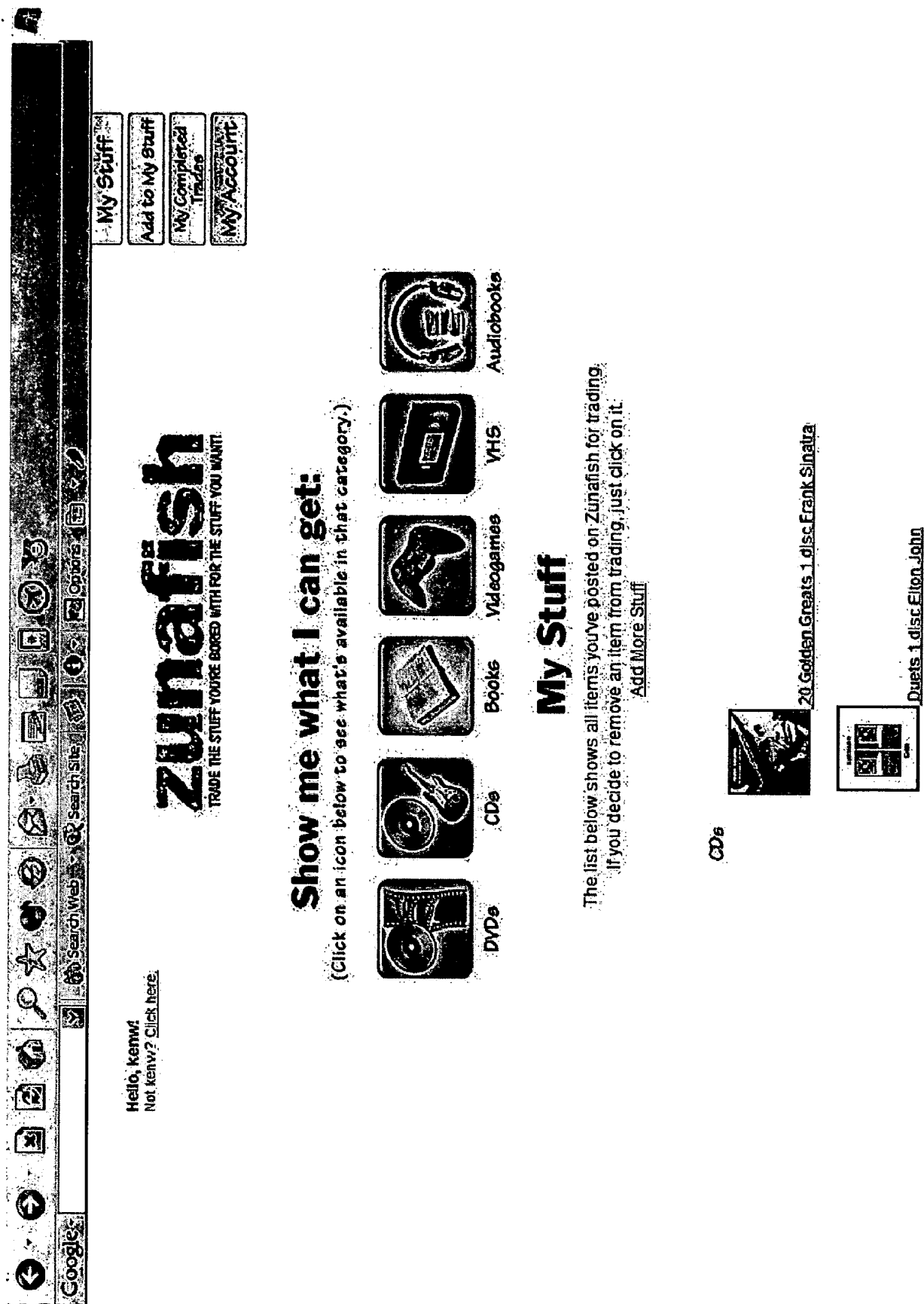
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Figure 4G



BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Figur 5A



BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Figure 5B

Home

My Stuff

Add to My Stuff

My Completed Trades

My Account

zunafish

TRADE THE STUFF YOU'RE BORED WITH FOR THE STUFF YOU WANT!

Show me what I can get:

(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)

DVDs

CDs

Books

Videogames

VHS

Audiobooks

☒ Trade Complete

☐ No offers yet

☒ Potential Trade

☐ ZunaAlert (New Offer!)

Running Man

☒ Stuff I want to get

☐ Stuff others want from me

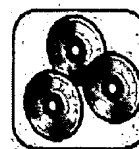


Figure 5C

Google

Search Web

Search Site

Home

My Stuff

Add to My Stuff

My Completed Trades

My Account

zunafish

TRADE THE STUFF YOU'RE BORED WITH FOR THE STUFF YOU WANT

Hello, kenw!

[Not kenw? Click here.](#)

Show me what I can get:

(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)

DVDs

CDs

Books

Videogames

VHS

Audiobooks

The Zunafish user bbloom wants your CD "Paris My Love"

Click on any title from bbloom's CD collection to propose a trade.

Bat Out Of Hell (Gold Disc) 1 disc Meat Loaf

Condition: Very good

Best Of Reba McEntire 1 disc Reba McEntire

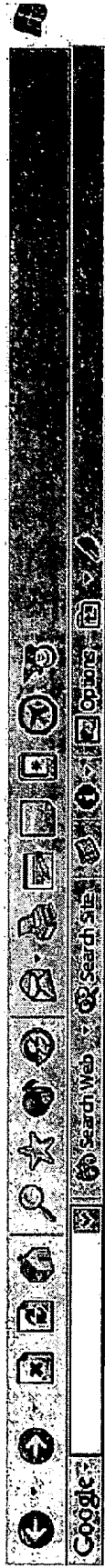
Condition: Like new


bbloom's Trading History Last (1) Trades
Items arrived in stated condition?
Items arrived on time?

[Dismiss this offer](#)

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Figure 5D





You are agreeing to trade your "Paris My Love" CD for bbloom's "Born In The U.S.A." CD. In so doing, your "Paris My Love" CD will be frozen from all other system activity for 24 hours while your offer is being considered. If bbloom accepts this trade, you will receive a trade confirmation email and \$1 will be charged to your account. Do you agree to this trade?

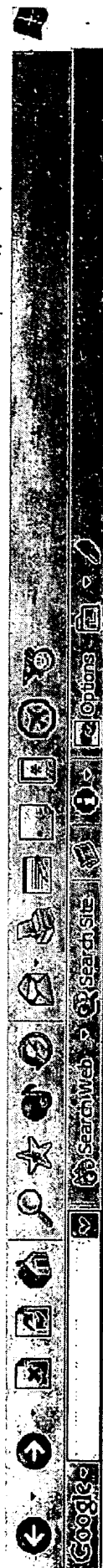


Figure 5E

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

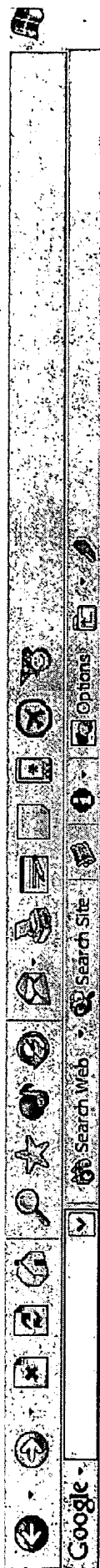


Figure 5F

- Home
- My Stuff
- Add to My Stuff
- My Completed Trades
- My Account

zunafish

TRADE THE STUFF YOU'RE BORED WITH FOR THE STUFF YOU WANT!

Show me what I can get:

(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)

- DVDs
- CDs
- Books
- Videogames
- VHS
- Audiobooks

No offers yet

Running Man

Stuff I want to get

Click to Finish

★ = Potential Trade

⌚ = Trade in Progress

⬅ = Zunalet (New Offer!)

Stuff others want from me

Click to Finish



Figure 5G

Home

My Stuff

Add to My Stuff

My Completed Trades

My Account

ZunaFish

TRADE THE STUFF YOU'RE BORED WITH FOR THE STUFF YOU WANT

Hello, danielias!
Not danielias? [Click here.](#)

Born in The U.S.A

Show me what I can get:
(Click on an icon below to see what's available in that category.)

DVDs
 CDs
 Books
 Videogames
 VHS
 Audiobooks

How to Complete Your Trade

Congratulations Daniel - your trade is almost complete! You have agreed to swap your Paris My Love CD for bbloom's Bear of Babo McEndro CD. Paris My Love has been removed from your collection and \$1 has been charged to your account; now here's what you have to do:

Within the next 3 days, please mail your Paris My Love CD to:

Cut this out & use it as a mailing label!

WILLIAM BLOOM
55 WEST END AVE., #11E
NEW YORK NY 10023

Figure 5H

Google

Search

Search Web

Search Site

Options

Search the web

Mail Home

Calendar

Notepad

danellias@yahoo.com

Mail Upgrades

Search Mail

Mail O

Previous

Next

Back to Messages

Delete

Reply

Forward

Spam

This message is not flagged.

Flag Message

Mark as Unread

Date: Mon, 8 Dec 2003 14:57:51 -0600

To:

Subject: Your Zunafish trade was accepted!

From: "Zunafish" <trade@zunafish.com>

Add to Address Book

Congratulations!

bbloom has agreed to trade their Best of Raba McEntire CD for your Paris My Love CD.

You now need to go to your "How to Complete Your Trade" page to find out how to ship your item to bbloom. To do so, either click the link below, or go to www.zunafish.com and click on the "Click to Finalize" button.

<http://zuna.nettheory.com/gameboard.php>

Please remember: you have three days to send your item out, so please don't delay!

This is an automated message from Zunafish. Please do not reply.

Check Other Mail [Edit]

Folders [Add]

Inbox (3)

Draft

Sent

Bulk (153) [Empty]

Trash [Empty]

My Folders [Hide]

Check Your Credit For Free

Free Term Life Insurance Quote

Easy Faxing For Your Yahoo! Mail

Best card for bad credit!

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ADDITIONAL INVENTORS SHEET

Page 1 of 1

| LAST NAME | FIRST NAME | MIDDLE INITIAL | RESIDENCE (CITY AND EITHER STATE OR FOREIGN COUNTRY) |
|-----------|------------|----------------|--|
| Bloom | William | | New York, NY |

PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FILING ONLY